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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this guide is to provide background and focus material for political action regarding several areas of concern related to children and their families: unemployment and the working parent, supports for family economic stability, health and family services, and the environment and the working parent. Each chapter presents brief sketches of typical family problems in contemporary U.S. society, text which provides background information related to these problems, and questions leading to local investigation and public action. Chapters focus on (1) stable jobs for parents, (2) public support for the poorest families, (3) equal job chances for all parents, (4) combining jobs and parenthood, (5) social services for all families, (6) child health and safety, and (7) the politics of children. A list of organizations and resources from which statistics, research, policies, and programs may be obtained is included. (Author/RH)

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The Children's Political Checklist

PS 010382

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The first edition of the *Children's Political Checklist* was sponsored by the Carnegie Council on Children, the Coalition for Children and Youth and the Early Childhood Education Project of the Education Commission of the States. It was written by Marilyn Marcosson of Washington, D.C., and edited by Virginia Fleming, also of Washington. The design and graphics were done by Shari Jones of Denver, Colorado.

This revised version of the *Checklist* was reviewed and produced by the sponsors, members of the Advisory Committee, and a number of national and state groups that intend to use it with their constituencies.

Single copies of the *Checklist* are available at $3.00 from the Coalition for Children and Youth, 815 15th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005. Bulk orders may be purchased at $2.70 each (10-24 copies) and at $2.40 each (25 copies or more).

The *Checklist* serves as a companion guide to two principal texts:

All Our Children: The American Family Under Pressure, by Kenneth Keniston and the Carnegie Council on Children, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1977. Now available in Harvest paperback through local bookstores for $3.95 per copy. Bulk orders from non-profit institutions may be placed with the Institutional Marketing Department, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 757 Third Avenue, New York, New York 10017 as follows: 1-4 copies, $3.16 per copy; 5-25 copies, $2.96 per copy; 26 copies and over, $2.37 per copy.

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The Children's Political Checklist

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Contents

Introduction v

Chapter One
Stable Jobs for Parents 1

Chapter Two
Public Support for the Poorest Families 6

Chapter Three
Equal Job Chances for All Parents 12

Chapter Four
Combining Jobs and Parenthood 15

Chapter Five
Social Services for All Families 19

Chapter Six
Child Health and Safety 24

Chapter Seven
The Politics of Children 29

Footnotes 30

Help with the Next Steps:
List of Organizations and Resources 32

Bibliography 35

Introduction

Who

This booklet is intended to be used by you: as an individual, as a parent, as a member of a neighborhood or community group, as a professional in a field related to children and families, or as someone who is interested in the policies and programs of government or industry. It can even be used by older children and youths interested in learning more about how their society treats them on a policy level.

Why

It is our firm belief that parents and their allies, individually and collectively, must get involved in politics if they want to improve the life chances of their children. If we do not get involved we will be faced with one of two situations — either no one will speak up for our children and families, or those with narrow agendas will dominate public policy. Enabling parents to act politically was the impetus for creating this *Children's Political Checklist,* and it is meant to supplement two major studies that drew national attention to the need for better public policies regarding children of all ages and their families. Kenneth Keniston and the Carnegie Council on Children produced ALL OUR CHILDREN: THE AMERICAN FAMILY UNDER PRESSURE, a broadly based, popular study, and the National Academy of Sciences contributed a more scholarly, technical document, TOWARD A NATIONAL POLICY FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES. These basic documents drew together social and economic issues affecting children and their families.*

What

The *Checklist* is a starting point for action, and bridges the gap between the theory expressed in the above reports and actual advocacy on behalf of children and families. It is a guide to asking questions about public policy within the nation and within your community. This booklet is not a "how to" manual on lobbying state legislature or reading the Federal Register. For such practical steps, refer to *It's Time to Stand Up for Your Children: A Parent's Guide to Child Advocacy* by the Children's Defense Fund.

Like the two reports, the *Checklist* focuses on several major social areas: unemployment and the working parent, other supports for

*Ordering information for these two documents is on the inside front cover.

family economic stability, health and family services, the environment and the working parent. Also, like the two reports, it encourages you to consider the ecology of families — the societal pressures that often undercut the ability to make choices of a family and its members — and to question some of the myths we commonly hold regarding how families function and their independence. Specifically, the *Checklist* begins at the conclusion in ALL OUR CHILDREN that "parents are not abdicating—they are being dethroned . . ."

However, although both the Carnegie Council and the National Academy of Sciences reports present specific recommendations about policies and programs, this guide is not intended to lead you to those same conclusions. *We have tried to ask enough centrally related questions to assist you in developing your own position and to enable you to present an effective argument for your point of view. What you do about what you find is up to you. But keep in mind that you can do a great deal, particularly if you join with others to help make your voice heard.*

When

The time to begin is now.

The political process is slow. It would be foolish to believe that changes in rules or institutions can be accomplished overnight. But attitudes, bureaucracies, and laws *do* change under sufficient pressure from the outside. We can speed up change by knowing the facts and asking tough questions.

Concerns about public policy have a life of their own. Thirty years ago it was only the farmer, hunter and errant scientist who worried about the environment. Now ecology is a recognized academic discipline. Communities worry about how to clean up local streams and rivers and, significantly, environmental policy is a concern of legislators and administrators of all levels of government and private industry.

Similarly, the time is ripe for questions and action regarding children and families. 1979 is the International Year of the Child, and a National Commission for IYC has been appointed in this country with a mandate to report to the President at the end of the year. The White House Conference on Families will be in 1981. These events are not ends in themselves, but opportunities to start the process of change that will extend through 1981 and beyond.

Where

Many religions regard Jerusalem as a holy city from which essential elements of their faith take shape and form. Washington, D.C. is often regarded the same way as the source of policies related to families and children, taxes, and employment. It is often easier, however, to initiate appropriate policy directions at the local level than at the state level, and easier at the state level than at the federal level.

There is not only a government in Washington — there are 50 other major governments in state capitols and countless others at the local level. Therefore, in this guide we will attempt to illustrate some areas of important activity that are going on or could go on at the local and state level, as well as at the federal.

How

Decreasing the vulnerability of families and increasing their freedom to choose among alternatives for their children is the goal of ALL OUR CHILDREN and the use for which the *Checklist* is intended. Many books and articles about children and families talk about a particular problem in the raising of children such as TV violence or immunization against disease. Few, if any, present a unified, comprehensive framework for analysis. We believe that ALL OUR CHILDREN does present such an analysis. Like all analyses it should be tested against our own knowledge. Does it explain past and present practices? Does it help anticipate the future? The authors of ALL OUR CHILDREN describe changes in family structure and responsibility in the last century. They suggest that a new role has emerged for parents. Does this analysis fit your own family? Does it make sense when you think about the families of your relatives, friends? How do you think it works for people who are less well off than you, or better off?

Understanding how best to begin achieving the goals which you deem most important is our objective in this Checklist. We want to take the reader from broad national issues into his or her own community through a process of inquiry. However, a general knowledge of the issues and the formulation of searching questions *are only the beginning.*

The next steps are focusing on what you can best work on in your community and learning the process of advocacy and what resources are available to you. In the long run, there is no substitute for solid factual knowledge, good organizational contacts, workshops to increase the sophistication level of those who want to be advocates, direct contact with the problems you are dealing with, and specific strategies and tactics for achieving the short- and long-

term goals you set on behalf of children. This means visiting institutions, if your interests are children out of their homes; talking to the unemployed, if a lack of jobs is your community's most pressing need; or visiting social service organizations, if that is your focus.

By describing some typical family situations in the chapters that follow, we illustrate some of the problems that families and children face. We believe if you ask yourself and others the questions raised in this guide, you can begin to go a long way toward setting and meeting your goals for America's children and families.

You will find some guidance in the questioning process from the Organizations and Resources list beginning on page 37. When you are ready to act, we suggest you begin with materials from the Bibliography at the end of this booklet, especially Section I, which will take you from questions into action.

Chapter One
Stable Jobs For Parents

Tim Buckley is a construction mason, now unemployed. When he was working he earned $300 per week; now he gets $95 a week in unemployment compensation. The $95 does not go very far in meeting the needs of his wife and two children. Irene Buckley just started working part-time at a local fast food restaurant. She brings home $40 per week. They have cut out all entertainment, reduced the costs of the food they buy, and exhausted their savings. Mrs. Buckley's mother helps out by bringing them baked goods. The Buckleys are thinking about applying for food stamps, but don't like the idea of taking "welfare" from the government or anyone else.

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The Malowski family is definitely middle class. Until last winter, Phil Malowski was a senior accountant at a casualty insurance company, earning $30,000 per year. His wife did not want to work when her three sons were in grade school and junior high school, and there was no financial pressure to do so. Although the Malowskis have had an income which put them in the top ten percent of all Americans, they did not have much leeway when it came to expenses. The payments for the house, car, new appliances and a college fund for the boys ate up most of the disposable income. The Malowskis were totally unprepared for the change in management in the insurance company which led to Mr. Malowski being fired. Although he is eligible for the maximum unemployment benefits ($116 a week in his state) that does not come close to his previous income. Mr. Malowski did not react well to being fired; it was the only time in his life that had happened. He takes out his resentment on those closest to him, his wife and children. He becomes angry at the slightest infractions of discipline by the boys, is drinking more and more heavily, and regularly fights with his wife.

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The Armstrong family has been under a great deal of financial and emotional stress lately. Ed Armstrong, 45, lost his job as a janitor when his company moved out of the area. He is worried that because of his age he will not be able to find another job. Mrs. Armstrong has been ill and her two teenage daughters have been doing the housework. The girls' schoolwork is suffering and they have both dropped out of extracurricular activities to help their mother. Mr. Armstrong was earning $125 per week gross at the plant. His unemployment compensation is $62.50 per week. What Mr. Armstrong worries about most is the loss of medical coverage that was paying the doctor's bill for his wife.

✔

Hilda Bell is the divorced mother of two. She returned to teaching after her divorce. She likes teaching because it is fairly easy to arrange her schedule and that of the children. The children, a boy and a girl, ages 10 and 8, can look after themselves for the half hour before and after school in the morning and afternoon when Mrs. Bell is commuting to school.

For a variety of reasons (declining elementary school age population, community resistance to raising local property taxes, and rising educational costs including higher salaries) the local school board has now decided not to rehire ten teachers for the fall semester. Mrs. Bell, as a newly hired teacher, is among those to be let go.

What would you say about a problem that costs all taxpayers additional taxes, that contributes to the personal tensions that reinforce the possibility of divorce, alcoholism and child abuse, and that deprives people of a sense of worth to themselves and to their families?

Those are among the outcomes of unemployment. This chapter will focus on the issues surrounding our national policies to counteract unemployment.

For all of the families described above, the last few years could not be described as a recession. For them it was a depression. The official unemployment rate has been between 7 and 8 percent for the last three years. Each one percentage point of unemployment equals roughly *one million people.*

The real rate of unemployment is probably even higher than the "official" rate, which does not count those who have become discouraged and have stopped looking for work, or those who are working part time but need to work full time. Unemployment rates are also much higher for minorities, women and youth.

The cost of unemployment is spread throughout the population. Clearly, the families of those who are unemployed suffer most. But all taxpayers feel the pinch. For every one percent of unemployment over a base of four percent, the federal treasury "loses" between $16 and $18 billion. (To put it another way, if the unemployment rate were four percent or less, there would currently be no federal deficit.) The treasury loses the money in two ways. First, it loses, for every one percent of unemployment, $12 billion in taxes that aren't collected. (Clearly, state and local tax revenues are also diminished). Second, it pays out more through programs such as unemployment compensation, food stamps, welfare and Medicaid. It also loses money through such items as a greater default rate on FHA and VA mortages, more people taking earlier Social Security retirement, and interestingly, a greater utilization of G.I. educational benefits.

While the economic costs of unemployment can be readily measured, the social costs are less easy to quantify. As Keniston says, "Earning a living is virtually synonomous with being defined as an adequate person, and failure to earn a decent income has adverse effects on the adults themselves, on their ability to be effective, caring parents, and on their children's image of them and themselves."[3]

Leonard Woodcock, former President of the United Automobile Workers, testified before Congress about the experience of Flint, Michigan. Flint is a center of the auto industry. When the plants shut down, unemployment exceeded 30 percent. It quickly became evident that there was an increase in the number of people seeking assistance because of alcoholism and, tragically, an increase in the reported cases of child abuse. Economists Ross and Sawhill also note a devastating long term effect of unemployment: separation rates double as compared to similar families without a period of prolonged unemployment.[4]

What public and private sector policies are designed to overcome the disruption of unemployment?

The most noteworthy is unemployment compensation. Designed to replace a portion of an employee's wages, the maximum amount of money varies from state to state. Some states pay a dependent's allowance for each child of an unemployed worker. The federal government further subsidizes the unemployed by declaring such compensation to be tax-free.

The federal government has also embarked

on a program of job creation and economic stimulation. The main features of the program are (1) local economic development – public works, (2) public service jobs and (3) reduction in taxes to stimulate spending.

Under the first program, units of local government (cities, towns, counties) submit applications for federal money to pay for local public construction. Such items as road and street improvement, building additions or parking lot improvements are typical local projects. Each jurisdiction is eligible for funds based on a formula that includes the local unemployment rate.

In the public service jobs program, a local government is given money to hire unemployed individuals. Typical of the jobs would be clerks, park attendants or keypunch operators. The program known as the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) is designed to help cities or towns restore services and give unemployed individuals work.

The third approach, tax cuts, is not as direct in creating jobs. The theory is that if people pay less taxes, they will have more money to spend and purchase more goods and services. Spending, in turn, will stimulate business and new jobs will result.

Economists have argued that job stimulation programs also stimulate a higher rate of inflation nationally, but such direct cause-and-effect relationships are now being questioned in economic circles (see pages 88 and 89 of *All Our Children*). Nonetheless, all programs which generate economic activity have to be balanced against possible inflationary consequences.

There is, however, an immediate and direct correlation between any severe loss of earnings and the ability of parents to make responsible choices about the best way to bring up their children. In a husband-wife household, the second parent may be compelled to look for a job even if that was not his or her choice. In a single parent household, the loss of a job can mean overwhelming poverty. The family of an unemployed worker may be forced to forego medical treatment because of lack of funds. Opportunities for activities for children – camps, sports, or other programs – are likely to be cancelled. There may be psychological troubles or increased drinking. All of these results of unemployment have long term effects on the development of children.

Checklist For Public Policy

1 What is the unemployment rate in your community? County? State? Has it been going up or down? At what rate? What is the unemployment rate for heads of households? Women? Minorities? Teenagers?

2 How much money is being spent in your state or community for unemployment insurance, for both the federal share and the local share? Are many people unemployed beyond the limit of the time they can collect compensation? How do employers feel about the increasing cost to them of unemployment insurance as opposed to the cost of job development?

3 Is your city or county government participating in federal economic development and CETA programs? Are there other locally sponsored programs? How many people have been hired? How many do they expect to hire in the next year? Are the programs working smoothly? Could they be improved by better local management? By changes in legislation?

4 Does your local area or state have tax or labor practices which would raise or lower the cost of hiring someone? Such a policy might be a minimum wage higher than the national minimum. Are there sound reasons for paying higher prevailing job rates, rather than minimum rates? Are there sound reasons for considering a sub-minimum wage rate for some groups, like teenagers?

5 Does your state or locality encourage business to locate in your area? Does your local or state government provide direct subsidy to business if they locate in your region? If your state or local government gives tax advantages to business, what effect does that have on income, property, or sales taxes?

6 If new business is coming to your community, what type of workers are being hired? Are they all white collar professionals? Are there job openings for less educated, less trained workers?

7 Should any government – local, state, or federal – provide assistance to private firms to hire additional workers? Should such assistance take the form of tax credits? Reduced Social Security taxes? Publicly subsidized training programs?

8 Should any level of government provide jobs directly to the unemployed? Are there possibilities for public service jobs in your community? What kind of work could people in such a program perform? Would they compete with other private or public job opportunities? What should they be paid?

9 If the resources for direct job creation are limited, who should get the first job? The second job? Who should be left to the chance of finding work in the private sector? For example, should a veteran have preference over others? Should heads of households with children have preference? Should single mothers have preference over wives? Should a teenager without experience be given his or her first job by the government?

10 Should an individual be forced to take any available job in order to receive other public benefits? How much should the government pay to those workers?

11 Are there people who cannot take available jobs in your community because they cannot find appropriate arrangements for the care of their children while they work? Are there public programs, like day care, which would make it easier for people to support their families?

12 What should happen to the person who wants to work but cannot find employment in either the public or private sector? Should the government provide direct cash to such individuals?

13 On a pie diagram, what percentage of public expenditures in your state or community benefit children and families (compared to expenditures for highways for example)? How much have state and community expenditures grown over the past five years? What kind of expenditures have grown the fastest? Slowest?

Chapter Two
Public Support For The Poorest Families

Edward Gomez works full time as a porter in an apartment building. He and his wife have six children, ranging in age from one to eleven years old. His wife stays home to take care of the three youngest who are not yet in school. Mr. Gomez earns $150 per week gross and his take home pay is $110. He pays $175 rent per month for a three bedroom apartment in a run down building. The Gomez children wear hand-me-downs from each other and relatives. The family does not go out to eat or to the movies.

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Juanita Thomas and her two children are on public assistance. Mrs. Thomas works part-time (20 hours per week) at the minimum wage. She and her two children aged 11 and 15 live in a public housing project and receive Medicaid benefits. The children do not see their father, who deserted the family when they were toddlers. The rest of Mrs. Thomas' family lives in Mississippi and the children have not visited their grandparents in four years. The Thomas budget does not allow for anything but necessities – no movies, books, games, or new clothes. Mrs. Thomas is increasingly worried about her teenage daughter who spends all her free time with a group of youngsters who are "trouble".

✔

Joan Timmons and her three children live in rural Florida. Her husband deserted her and the children two years ago. She never finished high school because she was pregnant with her first child. She was 16 years old. Now at age 22 she has three children, no husband and no high school diploma. Mrs. Timmons is on welfare and receives food stamps. Her benefit is $170 per month for the four in the family. After paying $13, she can receive $119 in food stamps[5] for a combined total of $289. Her benefits allow her to spend $18 each week for each child and herself for food, shelter, clothing, transportation and other necessities. She would like to work but doesn't think she has a chance because there are so few jobs in the area. If she found work, it would be low-paying because of her lack of high school credentials, and it might not even be worth it since she would have to pay for child care.

When we face the issue of income support policy, the focus of this chapter, we must first ask, who are the poor?

One fact to bear in mind is that a great many poor families are working class Americans: two parent families with children where one or both parents work. Nearly two million American children live in families where both parents work, and yet their total income is less than the official proverty standard. Many of these families share one or more of the characteristics that greatly increase the likelihood of poverty: they are large families (27 percent of all families with five children, and 33 percent of all families with six or more children are poor[6]); they are minority families (in 1974 children in black families were 3 1/2 times as likely to be poor as were white children[7]); they are less educated families (in over half the families with earnings below $8000 in 1974, the head of the household had less than a high school education[8]).

Another very large proportion of poor families are those headed by single women. These families are in a precarious financial position. As Ross and Sawhill observe, "Whatever their prior income status (and many were middle class), women and children who form their own families run a high risk of poverty. Almost half of them are poor (using the official poverty line) and a similar proportion spend some time on welfare."[9] As the Academy study notes, "In 1975, the median income for the previous year of a two-parent family with children under 6 was $13,089 for white families and $10,487 for black families. Single parenthood eliminated the race difference: $3887 for white families and $3877 for black families."[10] According to the Council, "More than 60 percent of the 6.3 million white children living in female headed households lack basic access to essentials, and for children under six in these households, the figure rises to 75 percent. Almost six out of ten black children grow up with less than this minimum. For black children in female headed households, it is five out of six."[11]

Who are these female-headed families? They are the youngest women. In 1974, just under half were divorced or separated, just over a third were widows and the remaining 13 percent were never married. The number of middle and upper class women who have become heads of households far outnumbers the poor, but because the number of two-parent poor families declined significantly during the 1960s the majority of poor families with children are now headed by women.

In 1975, over 220,000 girls 17 and under gave birth. Sixty percent of them marry as a result of the pregnancy but two-thirds of the marriages will dissolve within five years. This means 176,000 new families began as, or will quickly become, single parent families.[12]

One reason female headed families are poor is because many fathers fail to pay child support. Forty percent of all divorced fathers are not contributing to their families one year after the divorce. By ten years after the divorce, only 20 percent are making any child support payments. (A new federal program is designed to help all separated and divorced women secure court ordered child support from non-contributing fathers.)

In Chapter 4 we raise some questions about the difficulties single mothers of young children face when they try to combine working and raising children. Additional examples in this chapter illustrate not only single mothers, but other families where parents cannot, even when they work, earn enough to provide for their children. All of these situations lead to basic policy questions:

Should the government (federal, state or local) make available direct cash income to some groups of poor people? If it is decided that it is in the public interest to make such a payment, how much should the benefit be? Should we give the same dollar amount to everyone in the country or should we make geographic differences? What should the federal government contribute? State government? Local government? How should we decide which individuals or family groups would receive money and who would not? How should public assistance programs be structured so that they don't discourage people from working?

It would be nice to report that all those questions were logically thought out and answered when our current welfare program was established. But, as in so many things involving public policy, there was not a great deal of consideration given to such questions. The result of too little attention to the issues of equality, neutrality, unanticipated consequences, possible alternative arrangements,

costs to society and changes in society is our current welfare system.*

*A good, short description of the origins of welfare is presented by Ross and Sawhill in *Time of Transition: The Growth of Families Headed by Women.* They note:

> Public Assistance, the major federal-state program of cash assistance to needy families and individuals, originated in the Social Security Act of 1935. The goal of the Public Assistance titles of the act was to alleviate economic insecurity by providing public supported sources of income to economically deprived groups. However, given the overwhelming magnitude of need in the depression- recovery era during which it was enacted, and the limited public resources available at the time, the act began by singling out particular groups of people to be aided first. The three initial groups were the aged, the blind, and children in fatherless homes, the third group being helped through Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) – later renamed Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC).
>
> The ADC program was essentially an early version of revenue sharing. It provided federal support for pre-existing programs, generally called Mother's Aid, which many states had adopted prior to the 1930s. ADC did not require much change in those programs and, by adopting their approach on a national scale, carried a major inequity into federal policy. Children in families headed by able-bodied fathers who had little or no income were not eligible for assistance even though they might be just as needy as fatherless children. This inequity was translated further into non-neutrality. Needy children would be better off without fathers, which might encourage impoverished families to become female headed in order to qualify for aid. Framers of the act appear to have concerned themselves only minimally with these effects, however, because they viewed their work as only a first step in a broad strategy of income security, (page 9).

For all that has been said about welfare, one fact should remain uppermost in our thinking: most low-income people are not on welfare.

The reasons for this may be as varied as the states and as numerous as the individuals. For some, being "on welfare" is something they are not psychologically willing to accept. Other families would rather stay together as a family at a lower income than break up. The fact that infact, poor families can now receive food stamps (see page 107 of *All Our Children*) has probably contributed to family stability, in addition to improving the nutritional level of the recipients.

Let's look at some of the policy questions raised above.

Should government (federal, state or local) provide people money directly?

That question can be answered by asking a secondary question – what are the alternatives? One alternative would be to rely (as in earlier times) entirely on private transfers, either from a family source or some other private source (i.e., charity). Another possibility is "in-kind" transfers, such as direct provision of food, clothing or medical assistance, either through government expenditures or through private charity. If none of those sources is available, destitution, family dispersal, or even starvation might be the results and children would pay a heavy price.

Who should receive the money?

Under current law (with two exceptions) only fatherless families qualify. The two exceptions are: (1) the elderly, blind, and disabled who are guaranteed a minimum income, provided entirely by the federal government, whether they are single or intact families; and (2) the families in 26 states that participate in a program called Aid to Families with Dependent Children- Unemployed Fathers (AFDC-UF). In this program, the state contributes to the costs. However, there are severe restrictions on which "unemployed" fathers are eligible.

Thus in the present system an intact family where one or both parents are working, but not making much money, can get no supplemental monetary benefits* or related in-kind transfers such as Medicaid or housing allowances.

That our current welfare system does not meet reasonable goals for families and children can be illustrated by the fact that AFDC has strong disincentives to work. If a parent takes a job at low wages, most benefits may be lost. A fatherless family of four trying to make it on earnings of $4000 a year is, in most states, eligible to receive some help from AFDC and the related medical assistance program. If the mother were to get a raise, or a teenager to secure a part-time job earning $1000 and report the income, welfare benefits are likely to be reduced significantly, by around $600. In this example the net increase to the family would be $400, which means a tax rate of 60% on the additional $1000. (Economists call this an implicit tax rate).

In addition to the tax rate problem, there is also something called the "notch" problem. That is, one dollar of extra income can push a person into a new category resulting in a reduction or loss of benefits that will give an overall lower total income. This problem exists in many of our "means tested" programs.

As the Council says, "It is hardly accurate to call a program that works to break up families and discourages employment a 'welfare program.' "[13]

Both the Carnegie Council and the Academy Committee recommend that any family should be eligible for public assistance where single parents have sole responsibility for children, where a head of household (or both parents) works but cannot earn an adequate wage, or where a parent is disabled. They agree that a program should be based on a general work requirement, and should be designed to avoid disincentives to work.

The proposal for welfare reform announced by President Carter in August, 1977, is designed to achieve this goal of including intact families and the working poor among those who are eligible for assistance.

*A recent Earned Income Tax Credit program helps some of these families with an annual tax credit of a few hundred dollars.

How much money should an individual or family receive?

Pollsters, Gallup and Roper, have regularly asked Americans what they consider the smallest amount of money a family of four in their community needs to get along, the figure below which a family could be called "poor". For over 30 years the answer has come out the same: about half of the median income. In 1974, this would have equalled $7375 for a family of four. Both the Academy Committee and the Carnegie Council members strongly recommend that this standard, half of the median income, be established for minimum support for families that are considered eligible.

The present official government poverty standard is lower. At present for a family of four it is just over $5000. Fifteen percent of all children are living in such households. If the other poverty standard, widely accepted as more realistic, is used then we find that 25 percent of all American children are living in poverty.

Should the dollar amount of benefits be the same everywhere in the country?

Most observers agree that one of the major stumbling blocks to the Nixon administration's attempt at welfare reform was the problem of setting a uniform dollar amount of benefits nationwide. For the Representative or Senator from Massachusetts or California, $2400 a year did not seem like a great deal of money when one considered that rent alone might use up $1800 of that amount. But the Senator or Representative from Louisiana or New Mexico considered that quite a bit of money when compared to what working people were earning in relation to the cost of living in their areas.

Because there is such variability in incomes among the states, some analysts have suggested that state median income levels be used to adjust benefit amounts. This may make the system more realistic and politically acceptable.

What should be the goal of any program of income support and income redistribution?

Both the Academy Committee and the Carnegie Council have stated their views clearly; both support a baseline point below which no child or family should be permitted to fall.

The Academy states:

A reasonable and feasible goal for family

income support that would enhance the development opportunities of one-third of our nation's children can be stated as follows: No child should be deprived of access to a family living standard higher than half of the median family income (after tax) for a substantial period of his or her childhood, and family income should not fall below the government-defined poverty level even for shorter periods. It can be shown that achievement of this goal would increase the share of money income going to the poorest 20 percent of families, from the current 5.1 percent to approximately 10 percent.[14]

The Council states its goals as four principles that should be embodied in any income support plan. They are:

1. It should provide strong incentives to work. Maximum benefits obviously will have to go to families with no incomes. But when an individual goes to work, we urge that the program benefits be reduced gradually by a constant fraction of earnings so that taking a job will mean that one's income goes up significantly. However high the income, no person should have to face losing more than 50 percent of a raise through taxes or lost benefits.

2. It should contain adequate safeguards to prevent abuse. Adults capable of working who are not actively seeking a job or taking care of dependents should not be eligible.

3. For a family of four that satisfies the above requirements, it should guarantee an income floor equal to 40 percent of the median income for families of that size, with appropriate adjustments in the guarantee for families of other sizes and types.

4. It should, in combination with good employment opportunities – give the parent with primary child rearing responsibilities a legitimate choice of whether to work or stay home, without creating strong incentives or penalties on either side to influence the choice.[15]

These goals, and the assumptions upon which they are based, represent two important efforts to establish a basis for the reform of our present welfare system. The Carter administration has announced a comprehensive reform proposal which attempts to address many of these issues.

Checklist For Public Policy

1 What are the facts of poverty in your community? How many families and how many children live below the official poverty line? Below the "half of median income" line?

2 What are the facts about AFDC participation in your community? What is the average benefit? How many people are on AFDC? Does your county/city contribute anything or is it only a state-federal program? Who runs the program? Does your state participate in the AFDC-UF program? What has been happening to the case load in your area? How long do people stay on AFDC? How temporary is this help?

3 What do low-income tax payers (those not eligible for public assistance) pay for taxes in your state/community? For rent, food, etc.? Are they as well off, worse off or better off than families who are eligible for public assistance?

4 What are your elected representatives proposing, if anything, in the way of welfare changes? Has your mayor or county commission or governor made any proposals? What is pending in your state legislature? What have your state representatives supported? What is the position of your U.S. Representatives and your U.S. Senators on welfare reform proposals?

5 How do any of their proposals relate to the questions asked in this chapter? Does any given proposal treat all kinds of families equally? How does it affect low-income wage earners? What is the actual amount of money a non-working family would receive? Does it have a fair work requirement? How does it relate to a job creation program? Does it allow for geographic differences in cost of living? Is it workable, administratively? Does it provide for evaluation and accountability?

6 Who makes regulations to implement existing laws? Are there any regulations at the state or local level that might be changed to strengthen the family, reduce waste or otherwise reach the goals?

Chapter Three
Equal Job Chances For All Parents

John and Shirley Collins are struggling to make ends meet and provide for themselves and their five children. They live in rural South Carolina where Mr. Collins, who never finished high school, works as a gas station attendant and Mrs. Collins works at a textile mill. The children help out by running errands and helping with the vegetable garden and chickens that the family keeps.

Mr. Collins earns the minimum wage at the gas station and Mrs. Collins earns $3.00 per hour at the mill. She was laid off for a month last year when the mill ran out of the natural gas used in the drying process. Both John and Shirley Collins would like to move on to better paying jobs but they are black and believe they are victims of racial discrimination. While blacks make up 30 percent of the mill labor force, there are no blacks in the better paying finishing and drying rooms.

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Tom Gonzales has been teaching in his West Texas community public high school for ten years; last year he was promoted to assistant principal. Under a desegregation order the school has now become 40 percent white. Next year the principal, also a Mexican-American, will retire; Mr. Gonzales has all the necessary educational credits and experience, and so has applied for the job. But he has learned that a white principal, younger than he and from another community, has been offered the job by the white majority county school board.

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Isabel Fenwick has worked her way from teller to assistant manager of the branch of a large city bank over the last 14 years; she has received several company citations for outstanding performance. The branch manager is being transferred to another city. He has told Mrs. Fenwick that when he recommended her to replace him he was told that "the boys downtown would never approve a woman for that job". He has also told her that he can't go to bat for her without jeopardizing his own promotion.

Job discrimination against minorities, and against women, is not just a problem for those who are directly hurt. It is a problem for their children as well. The value that society places on parents is quickly perceived by a child, whose own sense of self is sometimes damaged in permanent ways.

Racial discrimination still exists despite federal, state and local laws, regulations, and changed attitudes. In fact, the progress that has been made may well have lulled well-intentioned people into complacency, effectively resulting in a failure to recognize and deal with a persistent problem of great magnitude.

Unemployment among blacks generally runs double that of whites. For black, inner-city teenagers the official rate of unemployment was almost 40 percent in 1976. According to the Council, one "researcher has concluded that 90 percent of the income gap between blacks and whites is the result not of higher levels of unemployment for blacks but of lower pay for blacks with comparable levels of education and experience."[16] The employment problems of minorities are often complicated by the problems of urban living since many of them live in inner city neighborhoods. The out-migration of employers to suburban areas, combined with often inadequate public transportation systems, has made it difficult for inner-city dwellers to both seek and retain jobs.

Women are generally unemployed at a higher rate than men. Black and other minority women have substantially higher unemployment rates than any other group. Even when such women start working, they are the lowest paid group in society. Women are still discriminated against in the work place. Women working full-time, full-year earn 57 cents for every dollar earned by men who are working full-time, full-year.[17] This gap between men's and women's earnings is growing. Economists agree that most, but not all, of the gap is because women are clustered in low paying service jobs with the remainder caused by economic discrimination against women. It must also be remembered that minority women bear a double burden and suffer even greater discrimination in hiring, firing and promotion.

Two major national instruments are available to deal with race and sex discrimination: Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which gives the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission power to correct discrimination, and Executive Order 11246 which prohibits the award of government contracts to employers who discriminate. But these laws have never been fully enforced, and successive court actions are a slow way to resolve complaints.

One of the major current problems about employment discrimination turns on the question of how big a pool of applicants is available. Sometimes recruitment is only done through closed networks by word of mouth. Sometimes tests of unnecessary qualifications are still required. Sometimes training opportunities are not available to get ready for the next job level. Another major problem is the matter of promotion up a career ladder. Race and sex discrimination persist in spite of great progress in recent years. Continuing vigilance is needed, and local investigation and action is often more effective than reliance on distant national enforcement agencies.

Checklist For Public Policy

1 What sources of information about race and sex discrimination already exist in your community? Is there a need for new surveys and information? Or is there enough knowledge available to make a decision about what kinds of action would be most appropriate?

2 Is there a human rights commission or public agency charged with helping employers correct discrimination in your community? How effective a job are they doing?

3 Is there any agency in your community providing free or low-cost assistance to employees who have suffered from discriminatory employment practices? How effective a job are they doing?

4 How should public and private employers be judged on their performance? What measures ought to be used to decide whether employers are being fair? What measures ought to be used to determine if employers have responded adequately to the needs of minority groups and women in your community or state?

5 What can citizens groups do to augment the legal and government enforcement process?

6 Are efforts being made to encourage employers to locate businesses in or near inner city areas? Can efforts be made to upgrade public transportation in order to improve employment opportunities for inner city dwellers?

Chapter Four
Combining Jobs And Parenthood

Tom and Rebecca Ferris live in a suburban community outside of a major city. The youngest of the four Ferris children has just started school full time and the oldest is a sophomore in high school. While Mr. Ferris earns an adequate income, the upcoming cost of college, even at a state-supported school, is not something they could afford without taking a loan or a second mortgage on the house. Mrs. Ferris wants to return to work. Before marriage and the birth of their first child, she worked as a copywriter in an advertising agency. Because she has been out of the job market for almost 15 years, she is finding it difficult to get a job in the same business she was in.

Gloria Johnson is the divorced mother of two children, a boy age 11 and a girl of 8. She enjoys her work as a typist in the local office of the State Attorney General and earns $8500 annually. Her ex-husband provides $100 per month for child support and no alimony.

She is due at the office at 8:30 a.m. and is finished at 5:00, with half an hour for commuting each way. Her children are due in school at 8:45 and are out at 3:00, with a 15 minute walk in each direction. Mrs. Johnson has managed her budget so that she can provide the basic needs for her family and she knows that her children do not need her at home during most of the day. She is deeply concerned, however, about what her children do after school and what happens to them during the summer.

Jane Columbo lost her husband in a car accident last month, leaving her entirely responsible for bringing up their two pre-school children. Although there is some insurance money, she knows that she will have to work if she wants to keep her house, her car and the standard of living she was used to. She has been asking neighbors about day care programs, but cannot find one in her neighborhood. She has also been looking through want ads for part-time work, so that she won't have to be away from the children so much while they are very small. Although she had experience with computer programming before she was married, she can't find any part time jobs in her field.

Cynthia and Eddie Hallam are soon going to have their first child. He sells automobiles at a large agency, and she is a supervisor at the telephone company. Her company policy allows her "disability pay" for 4 weeks of maternity leave. Mrs. Hallam has asked the company to give her 3 months additional leave without pay, but with the retention of her health and retirement benefits and her seniority in the promotion system. They refused.

Mr. Hallam then asked his company for a month's leave without pay when the baby is one month old, so that he can share in the child care and help his wife's transition back to work; his company also was unwilling to work out such a policy.

Mrs. Johnson and Mrs. Columbo are typical of a rapidly growing segment of our population, families headed by women. Over the last 10 years, the number of households headed by women with children grew ten times as fast as two-parent families. Now, one out of every seven children in the U.S. lives in a family where, because of death, divorce, separation, or out-of-wedlock birth, the father is absent.[18] These women are of necessity seeking jobs. Only a tiny percentage have the independent means, or the kind of child support and alimony, that gives them a truly free choice of whether or not to work outside the home.

In combination with the dramatic increase in families headed by women is the rapidly growing number of married women who, like Mrs. Ferris and Mrs. Hallam, work whether they have young children or not. Although many married women work because they must (a large percentage have husbands earning less than $7,000 a year) many working women often do so not only for the personal satisfaction it gives them, but also in order to provide their families with extra money for the "better things" we associate with the middle class – a college education, vacations and trips, consumer goods or home ownership.

In April, 1977, 38 million women were working or actively seeking employment. That is nearly half of all working-age women. In fact, while the percentage of women in the labor force was increasing, male participation was declining, from 98 percent to 92 percent over the last five years. In 1975, 27 million children under 18 had mothers who worked, and almost a quarter of these children were of preschool age.[19]

If the proportion of mothers who work is so large – and increasing – what, if anything, is being done in response? How can the joint responsibilities of work and parenthood be taken into account?

- A small but growing number of private firms and many government agencies are using a system of "flex-time" employment. Under this system, an employee may start work at any time between 7:30 a.m. and 10 a.m. and then work the required number of hours. Where the program has been tried, management reports significant increases in productivity, and employees report a greater sense of control over their own lives and more time available to meet the needs of their children.

- In Washington, D.C., a school in the downtown business district has extended its hours to be open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. In cooperation with neighborhood advisory groups and the local recreation department, pre- and after-school activities are offered. The school was losing enrollment prior to the adoption of the program but since its inception, local office workers, mostly female heads of households, have enrolled their children in the school. (It is interesting that this is the school that Amy Carter attends. The program was in place before she started and she uses the facilities two days a week.)

- Some local communities, such as Philadelphia, have, with the cooperation of local service organizations like the Jaycees, opened the schools for breakfast. The federal government will provide reimbursement to school districts that offer a breakfast program but few jurisdictions avail themselves of the opportunity.

One of the ongoing problems for working mothers is what to do with children during summer months when schools are closed. Sending the children to camp involves a severe financial burden for many families. If the family decides to shoulder that expense, they still have to find a place that is appropriate for their children and one that meets their time requirements. If the family were looking for a motel they could turn to several well known guides, such as the AAA or Mobil Tour Guides. Unfortunately, there are no such well known independent guides for camps or, for that matter, for other service programs.

An even more critical problem is the shortage of adequate day care placements for young children. One of the principles advocated by the Academy Committee report is that "For parents who choose to work outside the home there should be a range of child care alternatives, from competent babysitters to highly developmental institutions or centers, and parents should be able to choose the kinds of services they feel best meet their children's needs at a cost that does not require the sacrifice of other essential goods and services."[20]

Time out from work for child bearing or child rearing is another option that is very difficult for mothers in America. Paid maternity leaves are, where they exist, too short. Where mothers (or fathers) voluntarily take longer periods to care for their young children, they lose job benefits and seniority. For a skilled or professional woman, returning to a job at her former level is often impossible.

Employers also find it difficult to offer part-time employment in jobs at all skill levels, or "paired" jobs where two people share a position. There is particular resistance to working out pro-rated health and retirement benefits for such jobs.

None of these questions is easily answered; the reorganization of jobs to accommodate the necessary demands of parenthood is an issue that will take much effort and experimentation and, on the part of parents, courage.

Checklist For Public Policy

1 Regardless of whether you would have chosen to work at home or to encourage your spouse to do so, in order to raise your young children, do you believe that it would be useful for public and private employers to try to accommodate the needs of those parents who must, or who choose to, work outside the home?

2 If a parent who has sole responsibility for raising young children would prefer to work at home rather than take an outside job, should there be public support for that choice at some minimal level of support?

3 Does your school district know how many of its students are in families headed by women who work, or in two-parent families where both spouses work? Are they talking with these parents about the need for before- or after-school programs, and breakfast programs?

4 Do any private employers in your community use flex-time as a regular feature? Any government employers? How do local union leaders feel about this issue? If there are experiments, have they been evaluated, and the results shared widely?

5 What policies do local companies follow in your community about maternity leave? What provisions do unions push for in company contracts? What about longer leaves for rearing young children: can women reenter the job market at the level of skill and seniority at which they "stepped out"? What problems does this create for management? Are there groups in your community seeking solutions and experiments to demonstrate new combinations of work and parenthood?

6 What day care facilities exist for children of working mothers in your community? Are there any surveys which would tell you how much of the need is being met? What is the quality of available day care? What standards are set by city, county, state or federal government? Are facilities living up to those standards?

7 Are there play or library or other supervised programs for children in the afternoon? What about summer programs? What about the parks or recreation department?

8 How much are parents involved in planning and operating such programs when they do exist? Are there opportunities for volunteers in them, or for publicly created jobs? How should such programs be evaluated? Who should be eligible to attend? Who should get priority if there are not enough places to go around? Should there be an exclusive "means tests" for participation, so that only low-income children can attend, or should there be a sliding-fee scale so that all children can attend and parents can pay according to their income level?

9 Who should set standards? Enforce standards? Should communities have guides, like AAA guides, to rate such programs?

Chapter Five
Social Services For All Families

David Gilbankian comes from a seemingly serene middle class home. His father is a high official in the federal government. His mother does not work for pay but is active in church and community activities. David, 16, has one brother in college and another age 12.

He has become involved in regular and heavy drug and alcohol use, has been truant from school more often than not, and was recently suspended from school for fighting.

His parents no longer have any ideas about what to do with him. He refuses to listen, will not tell them where he gets the money for drugs or where he goes when he is not home. They are afraid he may get arrested but are beginning to think that might actually be good for him and them.

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Helen Baker separated from her husband when he started drinking heavily and hitting the children. She took a blue collar job at an auto assembly plant putting bumpers on a conveyor belt. She doesn't like the work much but it pays better than a clerical job and enough to afford a babysitter for her two children, ages two and three. She makes $250 a week on the job and pays $50 a week for the two children for all day care in a neighbor's house. Because the children do nothing but sit around all day and watch television, she would prefer to have them in a more professional day care program.

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Sarah Stolka is a junior in high school. She wants to get contraceptive information, but her school has no sex education classes and she is uncertain whether she can find a clinic downtown that will help without her mother's permission. She wants some place she can take her friend Ann, as well, who says she doesn't care about contraception and wants to get pregnant so that she can have a baby of her own.

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Hank Maguire has a job selling highly technical medical equipment for a large company, which he enjoys and is good at, but which keeps him out of town a good deal. His wife has apparently recovered from a nervous breakdown she suffered several years ago, but is showing some of the same signs of strain that marked her last illness. Their four children are now in elementary and high school. Mr. Maguire wants some temporary homemaking help for his family, and would like a personal counseling support for his wife apart from the large impersonal hospital setting where she went before. Neither service seems to be

available for families in his upper middle income bracket. He has approached his company about a temporary leave of absence for himself, but they insist that they need him on a number of new negotiations.

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Judy Lieberman has two young children. Her husband recently divorced her, and has left town without leaving his address; he has stopped sending the child support payments which helped her make ends meet in the first year of their divorce. She would like to move back to Cincinnati, where her parents live, so that she could provide a better family atmosphere for her children and take advantage of her mother's offer to help with child care. That would mean leaving the bank teller job she has now, and her reasonably priced apartment. She needs help in locating new housing, a new job, a new health care arrangement for her family, and advice about day care or pre-school for the older child.

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Billy and his sister June have had a tough childhood. Their father left them after June was born and their mother started working as a waitress and bringing home men to earn extra money. Their mother's drinking increased and she started "acting crazy". She was committed to the state mental hospital when Billy was 12 and his sister was 11. When their mother was committed, the county placed them in a foster home. The foster home was, according to the two, "O.K.", but they stayed there only for a year because their foster parents decided to move out of the state. Two more homes in six months and then their mother was released from the hospital. They reestablished a home of their own, but it only lasted for 18 months until their mother went into the mental hospital again. Both were then teenagers. The county took charge of them for the next three years, but could not find a home that would take both Billy and his sister – so they were split up. Before his 18th birthday, Billy had lived in four different foster homes. He was "trouble" in each.

Services – we all get them and use them. In fact, the "services" sector of the economy is growing faster than any other. When we go out to eat we are getting a service. When the typewriter repairman comes to the office he is performing a service. We pick a restaurant because we have heard about it, read an advertisement for it, or someone we know recommends it. We can find a repairman through the same avenues or by looking in the yellow pages.

But the services needed by the families in our examples are not obtained as simply as getting a meal served or a typewriter repaired. They require dealing with government or private agencies and, possibly, law enforcement officials or other public officials/agencies. They involve very personal problems that are not always easy to share with a stranger.

We take it as a matter of course that government will provide such basic services as education, or fire and police protection, or public health inspections. And we take it as a matter of course that the federal government will provide for the national defense, counduct a census, and do those things prescribed by the Constitution. But the Constitution has only general language about promoting the general welfare, and each generation of Americans must evaluate what that means in terms of public support for social needs.

After a period of great growth in government attempts to ameliorate social problems in the 1960's, and then a time of disillusionment

about the effectiveness of government programs, many people now seem to be looking for new and better approaches to solving social problems.

Of course, it sometimes appears that people are willing to reduce only those programs that they themselves do not benefit from! For example, most people do not regard the tax deduction taken for the interest they pay on their home mortgage as either a "loophole" or a subsidy by the federal government to them to encourage single family home ownership. Yet many people regard a federal program of building public housing or paying rent subsidies to the poor as an unnecessary federal expenditure. In short, home owners are willing to accept federal assistance in meeting their own housing costs, but are not willing to see their tax dollars spent to assist others (those who cannot afford to buy their own homes) with their housing costs.

The families described at the beginning of this chapter have very serious problems: children at odds with their parents, children abandoned by their parents, parents too overwhelmed by the stress of poverty to organize the kind of upbringing for their children that they know is best, parents who in spite of having money to pay for helpful services can't find what they need. Thus, the delicate question of the proper relationship between families and government adds an important and difficult dimension to the related problem of how much subsidy of public services the government can afford with our tax money. With the provision of social services often comes the power of public officials or professional caretakers to make important decisions about the future of children.

Traditionally in America many family services have been provided by private voluntary organizations on a charitable basis. In recent years, more and more public agencies have begun to play a part in legal services to families, in the care of mistreated children, in adoption proceedings, in mental health programs, in family planning services, in day care, in temporary homemaking, and even in family counseling. Both the National Academy of Sciences Committee and the Carnegie Council on Children took a long look at the present fragmented and inadequate combination of public and private social services and came to the conclusion that fundamental changes and coordination are necessary.

This promises to be a tremendous job. Many social services are now provided by institutions and people that clearly have a stake in continuing what they consider to be an important function. Every consumer has a bright idea about how to improve a program they know about. Reformers want scope to experiment with new ideas and ways to deliver better services. Child and family welfare programs now constitute a very big industry, encompassing a wide range of philosophical differences.

Both the National Academy of Sciences Committee and the Carnegie Council have concluded that the way to get a handle on this problem is to begin at the local level, by reinforcing the power of parents and consumers to organize services, and by integrating family services into a more coherent and usable network. The National Academy of Sciences Committee recommends neighborhood resource centers which would be able

> to respond to the needs of families by integrating and coordinating a wide range of existing programs as well as providing new services if they are needed. Each center would also undertake a continual assessment of such needs. The primary focus would be on those families designated as being at high risk, although services would be provided to other families on a fee basis.
>
> Centers would not attempt to provide all services on site (for example, complete health care), but rather, would assist in meeting family needs and obtaining services to which families are entitled by providing ombudsman and advocacy services to insure effective follow through. In addition, community resource specialists on the staff of each center would devote their principal attention to mobilizing existing community resources – schools, private industry, public agencies – to support families.[21]

The Carnegie Council on Children supports such an integration of service functions, and also suggests the formation of "consumers councils" with a heavy representation of parents to gather information about child and family needs, and to "audit" the performance of the providers. They also suggest that strong grievance mechanisms be built into the system to insure that clients have a place to turn with their complaints.[22]

In every community there are many children and parents with large and small problems. Some capture public attention when a case of child abuse appears on the front page, or when a facility to house runaway teenagers is raided by a narcotics squad. Some are simply familiar to all of us who have had a neighbor or family member come seeking advice about finding a suitable day care arrangement, or about whether to help a teenage daughter find contraceptive advice, or about how to find a marriage counselor – or a divorce lawyer. The list of questions which follows illuminates assumptions underlying the public and private network of services which we all use, or might one day use. The answers to these questions would provide the framework within which a better social service system could be built.

Checklist For Public Policy

1 What social services does your town, county, state, provide? Is there a place in the neighborhood where people can get information about what programs are available to them? Can they get help to establish their eligibility, or to fill out forms?

2 Are family services open to all? Are they restricted to people of a certain income? Neighborhood? Religion? Age?

3 Are there different kinds of services provided by public agencies, so that families can choose the one that best suits their needs? For example, all-day center day care, and small family home units, and morning-only or afternoon-only possibilities? Day care with a high educational component and day care that concentrates on rest and recreation?

4 Do social service agencies tend to separate families in order to "solve" problems, without examining alternatives? How many children are placed in foster care or institutional care during crises that might better be resolved by providing support to the family itself? Do family members have to go to hospitals for physical or mental treatment, because that is how insurance coverage is available, even though they could more appropriately and inexpensively be helped at home?

5 How many people use the services that are available? How many are eligible? Is there any outreach effort? Does the service provide for secondary services such as transportation or babysitting? Are the services open before or after regular working hours? Are there long waiting lines, or waiting lists for appointments?

6 How are services paid for? If they are privately run, or government provided, is there a sliding scale of fees according to income? Is the test to determine someone's income reasonably administered? If low-income people can use the program without cost, is there a "notch" which means such people lose their access to the facility for just a small increase in income?

7 Are facilities used by a mix of different kinds of people? Should they be? Would that affect the quality of services provided? Would it affect the feeling people have about their own family life and problems?

8 Who runs the programs? If they are paid for by private funds, is there a community board? If they are public programs, who sets standards, does the hiring of personnel, evaluates the program? Is there provision for consumer or parent participation in running the service? How do program administrators find out what the clients think about the program?

9 Is there an ombudsman or complaint center where complaints against government services can be registered?

Chapter Six
Child Health And Safety

William Adams, 8 years old, developed a high fever and hacking cough one Saturday night. His mother gave him aspirin and waited until morning. His fever was still high. On Sunday morning, Mrs. Adams decided to take William to the emergency room. The family does not have a regular doctor or pediatrician and relies on the hospital emergency room and clinics for health care. As in this case, they generally use the hospital when they are quite ill, and not for regular physicals.

If the problem had occurred during the week, it would have taken William and his mother 45 minutes on 2 buses to get to the hospital. Because it is Sunday, it will take at least an hour and a half if they make good connections. Because William is not bleeding or having a heart attack, it is likely to be at least an hour before anyone in the emergency room will see him. If the resident physician can't diagnose his problem it will take even longer because there are no specialists on duty on Sundays.

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Dr. Richard Lomax is a resident in anesthesiology at a university hospital. The father of one child, he and his wife were planning to have a second child. A few years ago, however, a fellow anesthesiologist discovered that operating room personnel had significantly higher than average levels of spontaneous miscarriages and congenital abnormalities when they conceived children. The research showed that this applied to all personnel who worked in surgery: men, women, nurses, doctors. Apparently waste gasses escaping during surgery are the cause. Because of the increased risk, the Lomax family has decided to limit their family to one child.

✔

The Douglas family has many problems with their middle son, Eric. Since infancy he has been wound up tight all the time, given to almost uncontrollable temper tantrums, and to hitting his brothers and sister and playmates. When Eric entered kindergarten, the teacher called Mr. and Mrs. Douglas in for a conference because Eric's behavior disrupted class. The teacher suggested that unless they could control Eric, the school would not take him until he was six and the school legally responsible. The family doctor diagnosed Eric as "hyperactive" and suggested behavior modification drugs, in this case amphetamines, as a control.

The Douglases were not willing to have their child take such a powerful drug regularly. But on a news program they saw a report of hearings in Washington about controlling hyperactivity through the elimination of food additives in a child's diet. Mrs. Douglas wrote for literature from the Kaiser-Permanente Clinic in California, and began following the method. There was immediate improvement. Now the major problem is to find food whose contents are completely labelled. They also have to educate a 5 year old about what he can and cannot eat. Eating out, in restaurants, schools or other homes is almost impossible.

Lisa Mitrovich had her second baby several weeks before it was due. The little girl was very small, and had to be closely monitored in intensive care for a month. But Jim Mitrovich's insurance policy turned out not to cover newborns, so the staggering hospital bill of $17,000 has wiped out the family's savings and put them into debt for years.

Melissa Peterson is working to support herself and two school-age children. Because she earns so little, and was recently on welfare, she is eligible for Medicaid assistance. But none of the dentists in her rural county will take Medicaid patients, so neither of her children has ever had even routine dental care. Her oldest child suffers from allergies, and the hospital clinic has referred Mrs. Peterson to the only specialist in the county who would treat him. However, the waiting list for an appointment with that overburdened doctor is nine months long.

In her apartment, Susan Duncan winces each time she hears the screech of brakes outside, because she knows that sound means another close call or another accident. Mrs. Duncan and her four children live in a public housing project across the street from a playground. The street outside her building is a broad boulevard with a traffic light on the corner. However, the entrance to the playground is in the middle of the block. Many children, eager to get to the playground or in a hurry to get home to answer a "call of nature" try to shorten the route by crossing in mid-block or diagonally from the corner. Two years ago Mrs. Duncan's then 4-year-old daughter was struck by a car. She suffered a compound fracture of her leg and a broken collar bone. She was in the hospital for six weeks and at home for an additional four months. Mrs. Duncan had to give up her job to stay home and care for her daughter. Mrs. Duncan and the tenants' organization of the project have petitioned for the last two years either to have an overpass put in or to move the entrance of the playground to the corner, but nothing has been done. Between the time of Mrs. Duncan's daughter's injuries and the present, one 3-year-old has been killed and three other children injured.

Among the many social services available to American families, there is now only one that we have as a nation decided to provide entirely at public expense, paid for by taxes on the whole population including those who do not use the service. That is the public education system. Many people are now considering whether good health is also as basic a right as education, and whether there should be a national public responsibility for subsidizing health care.

As a nation we already spend enormous sums on health care. Currently we spend about 8 percent of our gross national product on health, which translates to about $1.6 trillion, or proportionately more than any other industrialized nation. And yet, for this money, we have developed a system open to much criticism — excellent care for health crises and serious illness, but not very good public or preventive health care. Our national statistics about life expectancy and infant mortality are well behind a dozen other industrialized countries.

According to the Carnegie Council, it is "outside the hospital setting that the system breaks down, especially for the poor, and most especially for children, whose contact with the health-care system comes chiefly through services that focus on primary care, the kind of care dealing with basic and general health problems."[23]

Many of the signs of insufficient child health care in America are reported in the two studies*: unattended mental and behavioral and learning problems, grave inequities in health standards for low income and minority families, too few health resources in rural and inner city communities, a confusing and inaccessible system for the 25 percent of all children who must use the public sector for medical care, rising statistics on teenage pregnancy and on child abuse, too little pregnancy care for many women, high rates of children born with disabilities or killed while young in accidents, and disturbing data about the lack of regular immunization against disease.

Mrs. Duncan's girl in our example is one of the many children injured in motor vehicle accidents each year. Accidents are the leading cause of death among children, and the rate is increasing. In 1973, 40 percent of all deaths for children 1 to 4 years old were accidental and 38 percent of these were motor vehicle related deaths. For older children, 5 to 14 years old, accidents accounted for over half the deaths and half of these were motor vehicle accidents.[24]

Occupational hazards appear to be a large and growing source of illness, accidents and death not only to the workers directly involved but also to their spouses, children and communities. Many of these hazards are slow-acting and long-term in nature and the potential outcomes difficult to predict.

Our example of what was happening in operating rooms is just one of the better researched and known examples of occupational disease. Others are only now being documented. Dr. Dorothy Rice, head of the National Center for Health Statistics, recently told Congress that the cancer rate among black men was three times as high as the rate for white men. Admittedly without firm evidence, her guess as to the reasons for this new development is that black men are more likely to work in heavy industrial production jobs and live in cities where the exposure to occupational and environmental cancer causing agents is higher.

It is evident that there are many people who are not going to give up their cars, jobs or favorite foods because of possible risk. But many are interested in reducing and eliminating those risks we know about and can control without suffering dislocation to our lives. How to predict those risks and protect ourselves and our children from them remains a tremendously difficult problem.

The Academy and Carnegie groups both stress that bringing better health and safety to all children equitably requires more than simply the change in health financing which a national health insurance program would provide.

They advocate much more active involvement of the medical profession in changing the environmental and social conditions that cause death and disease: the lack of easily accessible facilities for inexpensive primary care, the dangers of accidents in the home and the streets, the threats to unborn babies which are increasingly found in the parents' workplace,

*See also *Doctors and Dollars are Not Enough*, Children's Defense Fund, Washington, D.C. 1976 and *America's Children: 1976* National Council of Organizations for Children and Youth, Washington, D.C. 1976.

and the lack of preventive public health programs that particularly deprive poor children of future good health.

Both groups contend that health care for children needs to be reorganized to deliver primary and preventive care more effectively. An important part of such a reorganization would be a better system for monitoring the health of all children. The Carnegie Council recommends the establishment of "consumer councils" or community health authorities to be the equivalent of a local school board for child health.

Although we have solved many problems of disease and sanitation which used to cause serious child illness and death, new and continuing health problems present a challenge.

Checklist For Public Policy

1 What are the most serious child health problems in your community? How many people are being treated for birth defects that were preventable? What is your state and local infant mortality rate? Who collects data on disease and death and crippling conditions among children? Is enough information available or should your community find out more?

2 Who does health planning in your community? Under several federal and state programs, planning boards now exist. What information do they collect? How much do they respond to the child health needs of highest priority? What mixture of professional and lay people serve on these boards?

3 Do health planners regularly survey such basic child health programs as immunization? Do they include occupational safety and neighborhood safety among their concerns? Do they coordinate their work with those in charge of enforcing clean air and water standards? Do they monitor waste disposal? The health effects of pesticides?

4 How is Medicaid working in your community, and its child health screening program, the Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) program?* How many children should be eligible? How many are actually served? Are the children getting treated for the problems that are discovered? How convenient are the doctors and clinics that serve Medicaid patients in families where the parents work all day? Is there help with transportation or baby sitting so that families can use the services? Are there long waiting lists, and long waiting lines?

5 What kind of services are available for family planning? For prenatal care? For health education for new mothers?

6 Does your state require that insurance companies include provision for newborns? How much would such a requirement cost policy-owners?

7 What do public immunization programs cost? What are the costs of failing to provide immunization programs (for example, the costs of treating birth defects after an outbreak of rubella)?

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*Congress has proposed some adjustments in the program and a change in name to the Child Health Assistance Program (CHAP). The 95th Congress did not vote on the proposed changes.

Chapter Seven

The Politics Of Children

In this booklet we have raised questions about a range of policies that go beyond traditional child development issues. Those who shared the planning for this guide believe that in order to strengthen family life in America, and improve the life chances of all our children, we need to undertake a number of broad public policy changes.

We believe the goals of a new child and family policy should be:

1. *to provide maximum choice for parents about the ways they can bring up their children;*
2. *to provide maximum information to all parents so that these choices will be informed ones;*
3. *to keep families together and interdependent in times of crisis;*
4. *to provide a range of family support services which are accessible to all families equitably;*
5. *to assure maximum parent participation and authority in planning and implementing family services;*
6. *to provide for responsible community-based evaluation of public and private programs;*
7. *to recognize and reinforce diversity and pluralism in family life and values, responding to economic and social changes that affect family life;*
8. *to be sure that all policies have been considered in the light of the cost of doing nothing. the cost of alternatives, and long term consequences.*

Most of all, we believe that the needs of young children should always be considered in the context of the needs of their families – and, in particular, their parents. There is a place for the traditional belief that parents can, should and will sacrifice their own needs in order to meet the present and future needs of their children. At the same time, we recognize that it is the physical and mental well-being of parents that creates the family climate which, in turn, nurtures the development of young children. It cannot be too carefully guarded.

As a nation, we are currently undergoing a re-examination of our social policies for families and children. We have a heritage of previous efforts, some of which have worked, some of which have not, all of which, in some way, have shaped our current attitude. We do not have a consensus but we do have an exciting moment in our social history where there is support for a new surge of creativity in social policy development. A new national debate begins. The most important thing we can do for our children is to get involved in that debate – in essence, to get involved in the political process, the politics of children. We can, through voluntary involvement and through joint discussion and action, provide a clearer demand for public policies for children and their families, and state what those policies should be. We hope that this book provides a basis for accelerating that demand and enhancing your informed participation.

FOOTNOTES

[1] Keniston, K., Carnegie Council on Children, *All Our Children: The American Family Under Pressure*, (New York: Harcourt Brace and Jovanovich) 1977, pp. 18-19.

[2] Advisory Committee on Child Development, National Research Council, National Academy of Sciences, *Toward A National Policy for Children and Families*, (Washington, D.C.: National Academy of Sciences) 1976, p. 11.

[3] Keniston, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

[4] Ross, Heather and Sawhill, Isabel, *Time of Transition: The Growth of Families Headed by Women*, (Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute) 1975, p. 59.

[5] The payment requirements for food stamps are eliminated in current legislation.

[6] National Council of Organizations for Children and Youth, *America's Children: 1976*, (Washington, D.C.: National Council of Organizations for Children and Youth) 1976, p. 20.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 22.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 20.

[9] Ross and Sawhill, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

[10] Advisory Committee, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

[11] Keniston, *op. cit.*, pp. 30-31.

[12] Jones, Jean, *The American Family: Problems in Federal Policy*, (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Services, The Library of Congress) 1977, p. 6.

[13] Keniston, *op. cit.*, p. 106.

[14] Advisory Committee, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

[15] Keniston, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 92.

[17] *Handbook of Labor Statistics, 1975.* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics).

[18] Ross and Sawhill, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

[19] Advisory Committee, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 66.

[21] *Ibid.*, p. 96

[22] Keniston, *op. cit.*, pp. 144-150.

[23] *Ibid.*, p. 157.

[24] America's Children, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

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Help With the Next Steps: List of Organizations and Resources

A large number of resources exist within each community that can help you gather facts and figures as you begin to ask questions. Many of these organizations are not typically associated with addressing problems of children and families that reach beyond issues of social services. Many of them, however, do maintain offices which have statistics, research, policies, and programs that you can make use of.

In using this list to start your questioning process, remember that even an office which can't help you directly may be able to give you leads to other offices and organizations that can. Especially when dealing with government bureaucracies, find out what information is available from a particular office and what other agencies or offices may have other information for you.

Organizations and Resources

A. NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

1. Action for Children's Television, 46 Austin Street, Newtonville, Mass. 02160.
2. Black Child Development Institute, 1463 Rhode Island Avenue, Washington, D.C.
3. Carnegie Council on Children, 1619 Broadway, Room 906, New York, N.Y. 10019 (through July 1979).
4. Child and Family Justice Project, National Council of Churches, 475 Riverside Drive, Room 564, New York, N.Y. 10027.
5. Child Welfare League of America (CWLA), 67 Irving Place, New York, N.Y. 10003.
6. The Children's Defense Fund, 1520 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.
7. Children's Foundation, 1028 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.
8. Coalition for Children and Youth, 815 15th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005.

9. Day Care and Child Development Council of America, 805 15th Street, Suite 520, Washington, D.C. 20005.

10. National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1834 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009.

11. National Council of Jewish Women, 15 East 26th Street, New York, N.Y. 10010.

B. RESOURCES

(1) *Agencies*

Public and private agencies are usually listed in the yellow pages of the phone book under social service organizations. Government agencies are usually listed separately in the white pages. Examples:

- Employment agencies
- County Court Houses—Office of statistics
- Child and Family Welfare Agencies
- Health Departments and health related organizations
- Bureaus of Statistics
- Housing and Urban Development Agencies

(2) *Associations and Organizations*

Public and private associations can help provide information. Where employment is concerned, associations that deal with jobs and job security keep a great deal of information about employment statistics. Examples:

- Professional associations such as local education, bar (lawyers) and medical Associations
- Nurses Associations
- Hospital Associations
- Family Services Association
- Children and Youth Organizations
- "Locals" of Unions such as the AFL/CIO, American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees.
- Local Chapters of Women's Organizations such as the National Organization of Women, Junior League and League of Women Voters
- Fraternal Organizations such as the Elks, Eagles, Lions, Rotary, Moose, etc.
- Volunteers of America
- Welfare Rights Organizations
- American Civil Liberties Union

(3) *Business and Industry Groups*

Employment and economic issues are of great importance to business and industry. They too keep statistics. Some examples are:

- Chamber of Commerce
- Business Associations
- Junior Chamber of Commerce
- Economic Development Councils

(4) *Councils*

- Councils of Mayors, Governors, State Legislators, etc.
- Safety Councils

(5) *Charitable and Volunteer Groups*

- Charitable foundations
- Church groups
- Salvation Army
- Volunteers in Service to America
- United Way
- Catholic Charities

(6) *Farm Groups*

- Future Farmers of America
- Farmers Union
- Agricultural Extension Offices

(7) *Institutions*

- Libraries: Especially reference librarians
- Schools, colleges, and universities: Especially those who might be researching a relevant program
- Churches
- Home for Boys, Girls, Women, Men
- Hospitals
- Vocational Training Institutions

(8) *Youth Service Organizations*

- Girls and Boys Clubs
- Girls Scouts, Boy Scouts
- YM and YWCA's
- YM and YWHA's
- 4-H

Listing the names, numbers and key personnel of these resources and keeping an up-to-date mailing list will be helpful.

Bibliography

I. Children's Advocacy 35
II. Facts 35
III. General Issues 36
IV. Economic Issues 36
V. Children's Services 37
VI. Juvenile Justice 37
VII. Minority Issues 38
VIII. Handicapped Children 38
IX. Children's Health 39
X. Children Out of Their Homes 39

Please note that this bibliography does not contain references to public education and parent training, issues on which information is more readily available than the issues below. In addition, this bibliography is meant to serve as a sample of material available; it is not intended to be totally comprehensive or representative of any particular organization or point of view.

I. CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY

*Children's Defense Fund. *It's Time to Stand Up for Your Children: A Parent's Guide to Child Advocacy,* What is child advocacy? How can parents be effective advocates for their children? What are the steps to take? What obstacles will parents encounter? These and other questions are answered in this simple and direct handbook for parents. ($1.50)

_____. *National Legislative Agenda for Children,* 1978. Children's needs are short-changed at the national level. They do not vote and they are under-represented in the political processes that decide policies and allocate resources. Here CDF sets out its immediate and long-term legislative goals in child health, education, child welfare, child care and development and juvenile justice. (Free)

_____. *Where do you look? Whom do you Ask? How do you know? Resources from Child Advocates.* Forthcoming in 1978. Information is a key to effective advocacy. This handbook suggests how to use existing sources of in-information, many of them public and free, to work on behalf of children at the state and local level. ($1.50)

Coalition for Children and Youth. 1977-78. *Director for Child Advocates,* Washington, D.C.: Coalition for Children and Youth, 815 15th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005. A listing of Congress and Federal agencies.

II. FACTS

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*All Defense Fund publications may be ordered from CDF, 1520 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

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III. GENERAL ISSUES

Aries, Philippe. *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life.* N.Y.: Vintage Books, a division of Random House, 1965. Early Medieval literature is surveyed to reveal historical interpretations of the place, role and concept of childhood in the ages of man. The author describes the discovery of the pheonomenon of childhood and outlines various aspects of child life (e.g. dress, games and scholastic career) as they reflect this growing awareness of a unique developmental stage.

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Harvard Educational Review. *The Rights of Children.* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Educational Review, 1974. In-depth monographs on the legal conception of children's rights, issues and developments in children's advocacy, and proposed new social policies affecting children.

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IV. ECONOMIC ISSUES

Children's Defense Fund, 1978. *For the Welfare of Children.* Children are the poorest age group in this country and the largest group needing welfare. Yet the current debate over welfare reform often overlooks the enormous impact any changes will have on children. This brochure presents the facts on welfare and children, punctures common myths and urges child advocates to see whether children will be helped or harmed by various reform proposals. ($1.50)

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Sawhill, Isabel and Ross, Heather. *Time of Transition: The Growth of Families Headed by Women.* Washington, D.C.: Urban Institute 2100 M Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037, 1975. ($4.95 paperback)

V. CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Children's Defense Fund. *Children Out of School in America.* Washington, D.C.: 1974. Analyzes why some two million school-age children do not attend school. Chapters devoted to barriers to attendance such as poverty, lack of transportation and textbook charges; the problems of handicapped children; the exclusion of children by school disciplinary actions. The appendices supply a wealth of facts, from a compilation of states' compulsory attendance laws to their status on truancy and free textbooks. Illustrated 366 pp. ($5.00)

_____. *School Suspensions: Are they Helping Children?* Washington, D.C.: 1975. Following up on one of the leading causes of school exclusion, this CDF report has national, state and local school district figures on the problem of school suspensions, including a list of the twenty worst districts in each state and in the nation. Frank interviews with principals and teachers about disciplining students; a chapter on what it means to students to be suspended; and one on alternatives to suspension that some schools have tried successfully. Illustrated. 257 pp. ($5.00)

_____. *Title XX: Social Services in Your State: A Child Advocate's Handbook for Action.* 1976. This advocacy guide to Title XX of the Social Security Act outlines the provisions of the law and suggests how concerned citizens can evaluate and contribute to their state plan for using these federal funds. 28 pp. (50 cents)

_____. *Who Needs Child Care? Policy Options for the '80s.* Forthcoming in 1978. This report analyzes the existing arrangements of child care, evaluates the studies demonstrating the need for child care; and lays out the relative merits of five major policy options ranging from preserving the status quo to enacting a broad and comprehensive family policy. Illustrated. ($5.00) Handbooks also available at $1.50 each.

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VI. JUVENILE JUSTICE

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Wooden, Kenneth. *Weeping in the Playtime of Others.* New York: McGraw-Hill, 1976.

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Children's Defense Fund. *A Portrait of Inequality: Black and White Children in America.* 1979. Basic facts and figures on disparities in the status of black and white infants, children, adolescents and their families.

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Ogbu, John U. A Monograph for the Carnegie Council on Children. *Minority Education and Caste: The American System in Cross-Cultural Perspective.* New York: Academic Press, 1978. Written by an anthropologist who compares the U.S. with five other cultures, the book challenges theories that blame low school achievement on cultural deprivation and genetic inferiority, and points to the central role of a U.S. caste system and its influence on occupational opportunities. Minorities are not underrepresented in the job market because they do badly in school, but do badly in school precisely because society still confines them to roles for which education has a limited payoff.

Wagner, D.A. and Stevenson, H.W. *Cultural Perspectives on Child Development.* San Francisco: S.F. and W.H. Freeman and Sons, 1979 (in press).

VIII. HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

Children's Defense Fund. *94-142 and 504: Numbers That Add Up to Educational Rights for Handicapped Children.* 1978. Public Law 94-142 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 provide the backbone of the rights of handicapped children not to be discriminated against and to full participation in public school programs. This comprehensive handbook details HEW regulations in this area and spells out how children and parents can take advantage of their rights under these laws. 52 pp. ($1.75)

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IX. CHILDREN'S HEALTH

Children's Defense Fund. *Doctors and Dollars Are Not Enough: How to Improve Health Services for Children and Families.* Washington, D.C.: Children's Defense Fund, 1976. *Doctors and Dollars* lays out principles of good child health care services and presents working examples from a host of quality programs around the country. A checklist is included to help parents and advocates judge how well children in their community are served. Illustrated. 119 pp. ($4.00)

_____. *EPSDT: Does It Spell Health Care For Poor Children?* Washington, D.C.: Children's Defense Fund, 1977. The Early and Periodic Screening Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) program of Medicaid is the only source of health care for some thirteen million poor children. Based on in-depth field investigations of the program in five states, and extensive analyses of the federal law and regulations, this book presents the most complete picture of how this largest federal child health program is working. It makes a compelling case for its improvement as a short-term necessity for poor children, and highlights longer-range recommendations for national health insurance. Illustrated. 304 pp. ($4.00)

_____. *National Health Policy: Did You Know It Is a Children's Issue?* Forthcoming in 1978. This brochure outlines how financing health care can affect the services available to children and sets out criteria for child advocates to use in assessing national health insurance proposals. ($1.50)

Haggerty, R.J., Roghmann, K. and Pless, I.B. *Child Health and the Community.* New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1975.

Lewis, C.E., Fein, R. and Mechanic, D. *A Right to Health.* New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1976.

Lowrance, William W. *Of Acceptable Risk: Science and the Determination of Safety.* Los Altos, California: William Kaufmann, Inc., 1976.

X. CHILDREN OUT OF THEIR HOMES

Children's Defense Fund. *Children Without Homes.* Forthcoming in 1978. Each year thousands of children are removed from their families and sent to live with strangers in foster family care, group homes or institutions. Based on a study of child welfare and other child caring systems in seven states, this report tracks the pattern of decisions that subject these children and their families to public abuse and neglect. Vivid illustrations of how our laws work against families abound. Fiscal disincentives and official policies all serve to undermine family stability — at a great cost to the children and to society. Specific recommendations for change at the federal, state and local levels are included. Illustrated. ($5.00) Hand booklet also available at $1.50 each.

Goldstein, Joseph, Freund, Anna, and Solnit, Albert J. *Beyond the Best Interests of the Children.* New York: Free Press, 1973. Argues against the customary legal favoritism of "natural" parents, in favor of the child's need for the psychological sustenance that may best be provided by foster parents.

Hill, Robert B. *Informal Adoption Among Black Families.* Washington, D.C.: National Urban League, 733 15th Street, N.W., Suite 1020, Washington, D.C. 20005, 1977.

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